

Tonight, I am on the floor to give an example of what is happening in our military. I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, in the 3 years that I have talked to chaplains from the Navy, from the Marine Corps, from the Army, Air Force, that there is a prohibited rule that they should not pray in the name of Jesus, if they happen to be of the Christian faith, outside of their church.

Give you two examples. Last year, I spoke to a Navy chaplain in Hawaii who had been asked to pray at a remembrance service for Marines killed in Afghanistan and Iraq. At the close of his prayer, he closed in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. About an hour later, he got a phone call from a Marine Major that asked him to please, in the future, outside of his church not to pray in the name of Jesus Christ.

He was so upset, Mr. Speaker, that he went to a Jewish rabbi who was a friend of his, and he asked the Jewish rabbi, are you offended when I pray in the name of my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ? The Jewish rabbi said, absolutely not. This is your faith and your tradition, and you should pray as you see fit.

Mr. Speaker, 3 weeks ago, I spoke to a chaplain in Iraq. His name is Jonathan Stertzbach. He happens to be an independent Baptist. He is a chaplain, and he was asked by a commander of a unit to pray over the grave of a shoulder who professed to be a Christian who had been killed in battle. It so happens in the Army that this chaplain had to submit his prayer in writing to the senior chaplain. The senior chaplain, Mr. Speaker, struck through the words Jesus Christ. The young chaplain whose name is Jonathan Stertzbach, I talked to him by telephone, said, Congressman, I could not pray if I could not pray as I thought my Lord wanted me to pray. It so happens that the company commander, before he removed himself, asked him if he was going to be at the service and if he was going to pray. And he said, sir, I have asked to be removed because my prayer has been struck down. The Major told him, you go to the funeral. You are going to pray as you see fit.

Since that time, it so happens that a newspaper in America called Chaplain Stertzbach and he did comment about what happened, and so now he has been removed from his chapel in Iraq.

I have written to the Inspector General, General Stanley Green. I have asked him to look into this matter.

Mr. Speaker, I would be on the floor of the House tonight if this was a Jewish rabbi, if it was a Muslim cleric, and protect their rights to pray as they see fit. That is what America is all about, is the first amendment rights to pray, to speak as we see fit.

I hope that my colleagues in the House will join the 76 of us who have signed this letter and say to the President of the United States, protect the first amendment rights.

We are not talking about having altar calls. We are just talking about

in certain ceremonies and services that they pray as they think their faith and tradition asks them to pray.

Mr. Speaker, I will ask, as I close, God to please bless our men and women in uniform and ask God to please bless the families of our men and women in uniform and ask God to please bless America.

DARFUR RESOLUTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, this evening I introduced a bipartisan resolution expressing the disapproval of the Arab League's decision to hold its 2006 summit in Khartoum, Sudan. The resolution also calls on the Arab League, the government of Sudan, the Sudanese rebels and the world community to do all they can to end acts of genocide in the Darfur region of Sudan.

Recently, the Arab League announced its decision to hold its annual summit in Khartoum. Doing so will only lend credibility to a country that is currently under sanction by the United States. The Sudanese government continues to allow acts of genocide to occur in the Darfur region and deliberately obstructs the African Union's ability to stabilize the region.

Mr. Speaker, the current situation in the Darfur region of Sudan is dire. The U.N. estimates that as many as 180,000 have died, many of starvation and disease, and up to 2 million have been displaced.

The Darfur conflict is an ongoing conflict in the Darfur region of western Sudan, mainly between the Janjaweed, a government-supported militia recruited from local Arab tribes, and the non-Arab rebels in the region. The Janjaweed has been implicated in a campaign of murder, rape and intimidation sponsored by the government of Sudan.

Mr. Speaker, I do not need to remind this House of the horrors that we have turned a blind eye to in the past. The U.S. still will not recognize the Ottoman Empire's genocide of over a million Armenians from 1914 to 1921.

It took us far too long to join the fight against the systematic state-sponsored persecution and genocide of the Jews of Europe during World War II by Nazi Germany. And of course our shameful disregard for the 937,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus that died at the hands of organized bands of militias during the Rwandan genocide.

As the leader of the free world, we have a moral obligation to do all we can to stop genocide in all its forms. It was in 1998 when President Clinton said, and I quote, never again must we be shy in the face of evidence describing the failed U.S. response to the Rwandan genocide. Well, here we are, 8 years later, standing on the sidelines once again in the face of undisputable evidence.

So in light of the current situation, why would the Arab League decide to have their annual summit in Sudan? I understand that the site of the Arab League summit is determined by an alphabetical order rotation. However, genocide calls for more than business as usual, and that is the attitude that the Arab League is now using.

If there is one organization that has influence over the Sudanese government it is the Arab League. Member countries have a responsibility to rein in the Sudanese government and to do everything in their power to stop this genocide now.

I believe the Arab League's decision to hold this 2006 summit in Khartoum constitutes an economic and symbolic reward and could even encourage the government of Sudan to continue to allow acts of genocide and other mistreatment against the people of Darfur.

Mr. Speaker, the Arab League has a choice to make. Ignore a genocide and go forward with their planned summit or break the alphabetical tradition and send a message to Khartoum to do all it can to end the acts of genocide, to allow international peacekeepers to protect the innocent and to hold the Arab militia responsible for these acts accountable. This is an opportunity for the Arab League to lead. It is time for them to send the right message to the Sudanese government.

I would urge my colleagues to join my resolution. It is bipartisan, expressing disapproval of the Arab League's decision to hold its 2006 summit in Khartoum. It is time to send a strong message that the Sudanese government should be reprimanded, not rewarded for their support of genocide.

DORIS MILLER—TEXAS SAILOR

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, I have talked much on this House floor about our veterans, both those of today and those of the past. Tonight I mention another one of them.

Doris Miller was born in Waco, Texas, on October 12, 1919. He was the youngest of three sons born to Henrietta and Connery Miller. He was a good kid. He enjoyed playing with his brothers and was always helping around the house, especially in the kitchen. In school, Miller was a good student. He was also a fullback on the football team at A.J. Moore High School in Waco, Texas. They called him the raging bull because of his size. He was 5 foot 9, but he weighed over 200 pounds.

Growing up, Miller worked on his father's farm until he enlisted in the United States Navy at the age of 20 as a Mess Attendant, Third Class. He quickly advanced to Mess Attendant, Second Class and First Class, and subsequently he was promoted to Ship's Cook.

After training at the Naval station at Norfolk, Virginia, he was assigned to the ammunition ship *USS Pyro*; and on January 2, 1940, Dorie, as his shipmates nicknamed him, was transferred to the battleship *USS West Virginia*. When he was not cooking he was boxing with his buddies, and he became the ship's heavyweight boxing champion. He was serving on the battleship *West Virginia* that December morning in 1941 when the Japanese surprise attack took place.

As the bright rising and violent sun came up on the morning of December 7, 1941, Dorie was already awake and collecting laundry when the battle stations alarm sounded throughout the ship. Pearl Harbor and Hawaii were under attack.

He ran on deck to help his fellow wounded soldiers. In the midst of the chaos, an officer ordered him to aid the critically wounded captain of the ship. While struggling back to the bridge and then amid horrendous and heavy fire and bombs, Dorie came upon a machine gun whose gunner had already been killed. Dorie, rescuing his captain, made sure that he was protected and immediately began firing this machine gun at Japanese airplanes.

□ 1945

He continued firing until the crew was ordered to abandon the ship. Miller had never been trained to operate a machine gun, but he was credited with shooting down at least two Japanese planes, probably more than that. Later he said, "I just pulled the trigger and she worked fine."

In the spring of 1943, Dorie Miller was assigned to the *USS Liscome Bay*, an aircraft carrier in the Pacific, and he was on board November 24, 1943, when the aircraft carrier was sunk by a submarine; 646 sailors were lost at sea, and Dorie was one of them.

Before he died, Miller was honored for his brave acts at Pearl Harbor on December 7. He was awarded the second highest medal in the Navy, the Navy Cross, for his extraordinary courage during that battle. It happened that Admiral Chester Nimitz, another Texan, presented the award to Miller personally. And he said of Miller, "This marks the first time in this conflict in this war that such high tribute has been made in the Pacific fleet to a member of this race, and I am sure that the future will see others of this race similarly honored for these brave acts."

Admiral Nimitz mentioned Miller's race because he was black. The Navy had been integrated, but segregated responsibilities. So Miller, since he was black, he was assigned to being a cook on the ship. He was not required to be topside manning that .50-caliber machine gun on December 7, but he was there. He voluntarily helped protect his ship and protect his captain. By the way, Mr. Speaker, in the movie "Pearl Harbor," Cuba Gooding, Jr., portrayed Doris Miller in his actions on December 7.

Mr. Speaker, every February our Nation celebrates Black History Month to recognize the contribution that African Americans have made to our country. This Black History Month, as we note accomplishments of African Americans, we take time to salute their military accomplishments as well. We honor the loyal duty of heroes like Doris Miller. He was an extraordinary American and a sailor. He received many awards for his bravery during the attack on Pearl Harbor, and he acted above and beyond the call of duty. He could have certainly qualified for the medal of honor for his courage. He was a man of valor, and Doris Miller is entitled to respect and gratitude of our country.

There were many of the World War II Greatest Generation that gave their youth and their lives for our Nation. Mr. Speaker, over 400,000 Americans, young men and young women, died in World War II protecting our Nation and the concept of freedom. Dorie Miller was one of those Americans. And that's just the way it is.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CONAWAY). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

THE POLICY OF ROYALTY RELIEF

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to claim the time of the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, today Americans woke up to the unfortunate news that because of the actions of this Congress, the major oil companies that are drilling in the Gulf of Mexico are in all likelihood not going to be paying any royalty on billions of dollars, some \$65 billion worth of oil, that they will be extracting from the Outer Continental Shelf of this country and on which they would be expected to pay some \$7 billion in royalties; and, in fact, they may not be paying that. It may go even further that some of the majors have suggested that they are not required to pay any royalties on oil extracted from the Outer Continental Shelf. In that case, the cost to the taxpayers would be maybe \$35 billion, \$35 billion in lost revenue to this country at a time when we are running record deficits, at a time when we are telling people we cannot afford to help them with their home heating oil, at a time we are making basic cuts to basic education; and it goes on and on and on and on.

The fact of the matter is the policy of royalty relief that the Congress passed was an unwise policy when we passed it. But the oil companies convinced this Congress to do so, and they have convinced the administration to allow it to continue. Although the Bush administration opposed the further extension in expansion of the oil royalty relief program that was in their most recent energy bill that was just signed by President Bush, unfortunately, his opposition did not go to such an extent that he insisted that it be taken out of the bill.

So what do we have? We have the major oil companies securing leases on land that is owned by the public, land that is owned by the taxpayers of this Nation, to go in and to drill those lands. And in exchange for that, they said that they would not go in there and drill unless we gave them royalty relief, unless we took away the royalties that they were entitled to pay to the landowners, the taxpayers of this country, for the privilege and the right to drill those reserves.

These are some of the most important reserves in this country. They are some of the more important reserves in the world. There is a huge amount of competition for drilling for this. At the time, it was suggested that nobody would bid on these leases, that nobody would participate, that nobody would raise the capital to do so if they did not have royalty relief. The fact of the matter is I think the record will show that at the same time they were arguing that, they were already in the construction of the rigs that were necessary for deepwater drilling and that the decisions had already been made. Some companies decided they would bet on the gulf. Other companies decided they would go to the Caspian Sea. But the fact of the matter is the competition was hot and heavy.

For this Congress to have then just given away those royalties is a horrible mistake, and it is a mistake that the Congress must correct. Nobody, even the proponents of royalty relief, believed that there was going to be a complete escape from the royalties owed to the taxpayers for the development of this oil. They believed, as the administration has said, that at a minimum they were not going to get oil royalties relief, they were not going to get relief from the payment of the rent to the taxpayers if oil was over \$34 a barrel. Well, as we all know, the world price of oil today is hovering around \$60 a barrel. It has been as high as \$70, and it has been in the mid-50s, back and forth.

The fact of the matter is these very same oil companies that are seeking a royalty holiday, freedom from the payment of these royalties, have just reported the biggest profits in the history of these companies, in the history of the world in the oil industry. And at the same time, they are suggesting that they have no obligation to pay the taxpayers of this country what is due